

## [Jesse Jolly]

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Range-lore

Ruby Mosley

San Angelo, Texas.

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### RANGE-LORE

Mr. Jesse Jolly was given a vast amount of land to settle the colony of Hollow Spring, Mississippi, some time in the late 1700's. He had a son, William Jolly, who grew to manhood and started his family in that section but moved to Memphis, Tennessee, where William Tell Jolly, was born in 1851. William Tell, moved to Texas with his parents in 1854, and settled at what is now Round Mountain in Blanco County. He began to ride the range at eight years of age, at 16 became a scout, then a Texas Ranger.

"I found my first Indian as I rode my stick horse to the spring for water," stated William Tell Jolly.

"When I was a little brat four or five years old, I rode a stick horse, watered and fed him with all seriousness, just as I had seen my father do his real horses, rounded my cattle, and fought Indians. One day I rode down to the spring to water my stick horse and was greeted by laughter from a big dark redskin man, on a big white horse. C12- Texas 2 I almost had a run-a-way at the very first sight of him. I never will forget how the stranger laughed at me when I rode my stick horse under whip, up the hill and to the house. I loped

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in a-tellin' my parents that I saw a negro at the spring. I was used to seeing negro slaves back in the states. Father decided it was an Indian and got on his trail which led him to the remainder or the Indian tribe. He didn't raise a "rucus" since they had not molested us. These Indians were very friendly and came 'most every day to watch father split rails. They were very curious to know what he was going to do with the many rails. They would laugh and shout when father would show them that the house, crib, and fence was being made of the rails.

"The Indians didn't do any killing until the older boys went out deer hunting and would fire into them just for the sport there was in it. This caused the Indians to come in and steal horses, then if they were in a tight they would kill. Before they started killing, old Jack Limemore was going down a steep hill in a little single contraption drawn by a horse and about eight Indians were coming up the same hill when the horse became skiddish, then jumped to one side and broke the shaft. That nearly tickled those Indians to death. They shouted and waved good-bye until they dissappeared over 3 the hill. They were not bad then; not until the so-called whites started the killing and began destroying their country. Yes, that's right, they were ignorant- but happy. We came in, took their home land and put them on little reservations. We would fight, kill steal or do 'most anything if some other color come to chase us off of the land that we have taken.

"My father had open range in blanco County; went into that section with a yoke of oxen and one horse. It didn't take long for us to acquire a nice herd of cattle and plenty of fine horses. I began roundin' cattle when I was eight years of age, could ride, rope and cut out cattle.

"One Sunday morning the Indians made their first depredation in the Round Mountain section. Mr. and Mrs. Tom Phelps went down to the spring as they usually spent their leisure hours strolling through the woods or watching the bubbling water fill the spring after they had dipped their buckets full. While they were amusing themselves with the wonders of nature the Indians surrounded them and shot their bodies full of arrows, then took their

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scalps as they died. Mrs. Phelps' mother, Mrs. White, was at home caring for the baby and hid to save their lives. When the Indians left she put a posse of men to get on their trail but they came back unsuccessful. 4 "When I was fifteen years old I was attending a little one room school, taught by Professor Wesley Dollahite. One Friday evening he and his son started home from school when the Indians came from around Round Mountain and took in after the old professor, who was riding a horse with a half of a beef tied back of his saddle. He untied the beef, let it fall to the ground and thought they were devouring it, but no, they shot him to death with arrows, then went on and shot the son in the back. He fell dead with his face to the ground. We kids had gone on ahead but heard and saw the killing. The old professor and son had stayed behind to lock the building while we kids rushed home to do our evening chores. I always rode and rounded cattle after school hours.

"When I became sixteen years of age I was allowed to become a ranger scout. I got old men Joe Smith to vouch for my age and I got in the very day I became sixteen.

"Over in Llano County an old lady by the name of Friend, and her two daughters that married the Johnson boys, were staying together while the men folks had gone to round up cattle, and the Indians came showing their hostility. They shot the old lady Friend in the side with an arrow, then took a piece of her scalp about five inches wide from her forehead and skinned it back to her 5 neck, leaving her for dead. They captured the two daughters and went on their way. One of the women screamed, kicked and fought until they killed her and threw her over in the cedar brush. The other Mrs. Johnson was carried on to where they camped for the night near Cedar Mountain.

"That's where I got my first scouting experience. John Baccus, Captain of Rangers, was the leader for about twenty of us scouts. We were given our orders and got on the trail of those depredating Indians. We trailed them on and on into the night and found them camped. When we rode up they disappeared like stealthy mice and left the girl. Indians won't fight at night; they run. Mrs. Johnson was carried safely home to find her mother,

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Mrs. Friend, alive. The doctor treated her for two years and her scalp had almost closed up when she died.

“One time the Indians came down to Blanco County, made a raid and got a number of horses. We trailed them up to Silver Creek, Parker County, then lost out. When I was at Fort Sill they had about 900 there. This little song was very popular about that time: Stay at home boys Stay at home If you will Stay away From Fort Sill The Indians will Raise up your hair In the dreary Black Hills

“In 1870 the rangers were called in, then I hit the 6 trail for Bill Green. We went from Blanco County to Abilene, Kansas, with about 1000 head of cattle. I wasn't used to stampedes as I had not been a cowman for several years. We were camped near a stream of water when a loud clap of thunder sent the cattle on a stampede. I mounted my horse to keep them from running off of a bluff into the creek, and my horse turned a complete somersault down into the water, throwing me against a cottonwood tree. I thought I was on a limb up in the tree, when a flash of lightning showed me that I was on the ground with my feet locked around the tree trunk. I kept my seat until the cattle had gone on past me. There were about twelve of us with the outfit and they really did rawhide me about being on the ground and thinking I was safe up in the tree.

“The next year I went with old Bill Coffee to the same place, Abilene, Kansas. It took so long to go and return that one trip each year was all one outfit could make. The following year I went from Fort Worth to Chetope, Kansas, with Tom Young and Newman's outfit. Going up the trail will sure make a man out of you or kill you. When we were about 75 miles south of Kansas the coldest blizzard I ever was in came the night of August 15th. I was on the mid-night shift, stayed on two hours and was almost frozen before my time was up.

“I went in home and married Martha Jane Stephenson, 7 farmed for about thirty-one years, and raised ten children.

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"I was in Round Rock when Sam Bass was killed. He and his gang rode into Round Rock to rob the only bank there. Billie Coffee was sheriff and Morris Moore was ex-sheriff of Travis County. They called in settlers to help when expecting trouble, so a bunch of settlers were at the back of the buildings with guns in readiness. Billie Coffee saw Sam's gun and warned the people that trouble was there. He rode up and told Sam to stick 'em up. Sam began shooting and so did Coffee. Morris Moore was shot in the shoulder and Billie Coffee killed. Sam Bass rode about a half of a mile out and fell. Old Doctor Black went out in his hack and brought him in and he lived about five hours. I went up and looked at him after he was laid out.

"I never liked to talk the outlaw stuff after I was up in Oklahoma. I got one of the awfulest cussin's I ever got from the Indians when I was tellin' a little about the James boys, and that kinda broke me from talking." Range-lore

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### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mr. William Tell Jolly, San Angelo, Texas, interviewed, February 10-16, 1938.